

1959

## Notes: Alumni: Remember John 16:4, 1959

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### Recommended Citation

Kretzmann, O.P., "Notes: Alumni: Remember John 16:4, 1959" (1959). *O.P. Kretzmann Collection*. 148.  
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I

DATE Feb 16, 4a OCCASION Alumni - 1959

THEME Remember

1. This is a service dedicated to the past - a service of remembrance - a service in loving memory of all the former members of the U. who now lie in hallowed graves all over the world - men and women for whom there is no more past but only the eternal Now - These we remember this morning - in the hope that out of this solemn act of remembrance there will come a new awareness of the meaning of our own past and the <sup>divine</sup> purpose of our own lives - [This is a homecoming service which remembers, in a very special <sup>sacred</sup> <sup>solenn</sup> way, the first homecoming <sup>of</sup> those who left this University to go to a land of perfect knowledge and perfect peace -
2. In considering a theme for our service of remembrance I found myself having with a compelling haunting urgency to the greatest and to remembrance in the world's history - the first chapter of the Gospel according to St. John - the world's most magnificent philosophy of time and history - the unrolling of the Carpet of the years - and particularly the solemn words in chapter 16, v. 4: "Then things have I told you that when the time shall come, ye may remember" - here is that insistent, solemn, ~~emphatic~~ <sup>emphatic</sup> emphasis upon remembering the past which we need today - the <sup>memory</sup> ~~memory~~ of all the things he had told them - the remembrance of faith and hope and love - the past stirring in its sleep before the

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voice of the living God - the end of old memories - of old truths by which we must live if we are to live at all and not die under the crushing weight of the moments of life and history. These things I have told you that when the time shall come, ye may remember -

3. These things I have told you - what has He told them that was so different from the world's forgetfulness - well, He has told them about God - about God's sorrowing & yet essential judgment on the past - about God suffering on a Cross to redeem them from the wrongs of the past and the present - about God's holy hypocritism for the future - this was it - the heart of the matter - this was what they were to remember always - that they could remember - God because He had remembered them - remembered them so long and so hard that on day there was a cross and a man hanging on it - brought them by man's long forgetfulness, pride and hate - holding in His hands an eternal judgment and an utterly reckless love - and on that day - and every day and every hour since then - men & women have come down that hill silent and forgiven and ungrateful - all that is bad in the past - their own and the world's past - has been buried in the immortal sea of divine forgiveness - and all that is left is the word "Remember" - the golden, driving memory of a Cross and a voice "Father" - the word of remembrance and forgiveness - making you unconscious of the past - giving you a home in a homeless world - a light - in the water of our disordered



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4. "When the time comes" remember - [silly, I must say that especially to our returning alumni this morning] "remember" - no matter what has happened to you [in the intervening years], for good or evil, for success or failure - this is a time to remember - you may have travelled a road for different paths what you dreamed in quiet nights but at Valparaiso there were unexpected disappointments and now and then a sudden, uninvited joy - sometimes things are better than you had dared to hope - sometimes there are deep waters - [sorrow & failure] struck when you least expected it - at this you remember this morning - but I am standing here to urge you to remember, <sup>also</sup> God - the golden years when He was close and dear - to remember that He has remembered you and waits for you to come, <sup>home</sup> & finally - [at this threatening] - a war man's prayer is sometimes been uttered - and it is always been worth while you have wandered away from home - and a part of our service this morning shall be to make you unashamed to return to the part where God was and is - and where He has waited for you, in majesty & in love, since the beginning of time - when the time comes, remember - and the time - the time of need, of faith, of return - is now.
5. And when you have done that - when you have remembered God then you can also remember those who have already come to their <sup>end</sup> [first threatening] - those men and women whose lives speak to us today - that we may remember -

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6. During World War II I saw a letter written by a soldier to his parents from a fox-hole in France: "I am writing this letter to you just before going into action at dawn. I am about to take part in the biggest battle that has yet been fought in Europe. My idea in writing this is in case I am <sup>OWL</sup> one of the "costs" and get killed. To be killed means nothing to me; it is only you who really suffer, you who really pay the cost. I have been looking at the stars and thinking what an immense distance they are away. What an insignificant thing the loss of, say forty years of life is, compared with them. Try not to worry about me and remember that we shall meet again quite soon. This letter is only going to be mailed if" — that "if" is followed by a dash. The letter was mailed —

7. In the next few moments, as an act of remembrance, I shall try to finish that letter, not only for him, but for all the men, our companions and friends of other days, whom we remember this morning — it would not be as good as they themselves would do, but if I know the minds and hearts of some of them aright, the highest tribute we can pay them today is to listen to them once more as God speaks through them — through the veil which separates time from eternity — when the time comes, remember — I think they would say —



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THEME

Remember

8. We who have died sympathize with you who live - no sense of separation is in our hearts and no loneliness in our souls - we know now that all the morning our Death is on one side of the valley - we wait for you but it is not the waiting of absence and pain; it is the sure quiet waiting of those who know that their loved ones will come and that they will not be late -
9. But even before we meet again there are a few things we should like to say to you - we would like to think that you will now listen to us as you have never listened before - that our graves have given us a measure of authority and power which we, who were young, did not have in life -
10. We would ask you to make your remembrance of us an act of rededication to the tasks which remain undone - that you will devote your days and years to the bringing of a little more justice and truth and honor and mercy into the world - for this we died - and our death will be a mockery if you will not remember - tell our country, our nation again that a land is not great because of the abundance of things that it possesses - that great wealth does not make a great nation - that bombs and missiles and armies do not make it great -
- x that these are not the things for which we died - we died for the things of the heart and the soul - for freedom, for charity, for justice, for peace - if you forget these, you forget us - and

